

# J.W. Mitchell HS Music & Colorguard Course Info

Josh Hobbs, Band Director

Drake Middlebrook, Orchestra Director & Assoc. Band Director

Deanna Cheyne, Chorus Director



**Band Students:** Current 8<sup>th</sup> graders should sign up for Band 1 on their course card. Though not required, any 8<sup>th</sup> graders wanting to audition for our advanced ensembles can audition in May (the music will go out through the SSMS band directors). All band students participate in the marching band and the concert bands through their band class. There are camps over the summer for everyone to jump start the marching band season. Our Marching and Concert ensembles consistently earn superior ratings at District and State FBA Music Performance Assessments.

**Colorguard Students:** Interested in dance, gymnastics and/or have an interest in performing? Join our award-winning Colorguard program! Prospective colorguard members should sign up for Eurhythmics 1 on their course card. Prior dance training IS encouraged but not required. We accept all members but placements within the ensemble happen during an audition over the summer. This program consistently medals in competitive color guard circuits and is excellent for anyone wanting a fun yet competitive performing arts experience.

**Jazz Ensemble:** This is a co-curricular course and students must also be enrolled in a band class. We place students in the 2 jazz bands based on their auditions during the last week of school. This is for students that play saxophone, trumpet, trombone, percussion, bass, guitar or piano. Our Jazz ensembles consistently earn superior ratings at District and State FBA Music Performance Assessments.

**Orchestra:** Current 8<sup>th</sup> graders should sign up for Orchestra 1 on their course card. Our orchestra program has grown in number and quality in the past 4 years. Violins and violas are rented from a local music shop but cellos and basses will be provided in limited quantities. Auditions for the advanced ensemble will take place in May, with music distributed through the SSMS music teachers. Our chamber orchestra consistently earns superior ratings at District FOA Music Performance Assessments.

**Chorus:** Current 8<sup>th</sup> graders should sign up for Chorus 1 on their course card. Our chorus program has grown in number and quality in the past 5 years. The ensemble explores a wide range of repertoire and is intended for students with little or no experience all the way up through well experienced vocalists. Our chamber chorus consistently earns superior ratings at District FVA Music Performance Assessments.

**Keyboard Classes:** These classes are offered to for those who want to begin or continue learning piano. Piano keyboards are be provided and students do not need previous experience to enter these classes. Band, orchestra and chorus students pursuing a music track for college are encouraged to take piano before graduation.

**AP Music Theory:** This is highly recommended for anyone who may pursue music past high school. This is an AP course so it requires excellent study skills. It can be taken as a sophomore if you have AP experience and good grades but we prefer that it is taken in the Junior year. The pass rate for this class at Mitchell is above the state and national average. Band, orchestra and chorus students pursuing a music track for college are encouraged to take AP Theory during their time with us.

### **Frequently Asked Questions:**

Can I take band and be in AP classes? ABSOLUTELY! As with anything, good time management is necessary, but many of Mitchell's highest achievers in academics are in band.

Can I be in ROTC or play school sports, be in clubs and be in band? OF COURSE! We have had band students in every single activity on campus. We have great relationships with our coaches and instructors. Good communication and planning ahead makes this 100% possible. There are only a few things (varsity football and cheer) that conflict with our main marching band schedule, but those students can conference with the band directors and still easily participate in band.

Do I have to sign up for marching band separately? No, all students participate with the marching band as part of our class. If you are medically unable to participate please talk with us privately or email us and we'd be happy to find a solution that allows you to be in band.

I don't play an instrument, can I be in band? Yes, but we would require that you begin private lessons for a year. Otherwise we encourage you to join our colorguard, chorus or piano classes.

Is band hard? Just like anything you want to be successful at, it does take practice, but the experiences we share are extremely rewarding. So many of our students go on to be better students, musicians and people because of their time here. If you participated in middle school band you can be successful in high school band!

Does the school provide instruments? Yes, we provide larger horns like tubas, french horns, euphoniums, bari and tenor saxes, bass clarinets, bassoons, oboes, mellophones, baritones, sousaphones, cellos, double basses and percussion equipment. Flutes, clarinets, alto saxes, violins, violas, and trumpets are rented or owned by students.

Do music electives cost money? There is a flat Fairshare fee paid by all members in the high school band, colorguard and orchestra. The amount is very achievable and we hold dozens of fundraising opportunities. We have never excluded someone from band or guard for financial reasons. Piano classes do not have fees outside of the school registration fees. Jazz ensemble and AP music theory do not require any additional fees.

I participated in beginning/intermediate band/orchestra/chorus last year, am I ready for high school? Yes! We can work with anyone who wants to continue playing music!

If you have any other questions about our Music electives, please contact us!

#### **Josh Hobbs**

Band Director

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**JWMHS\_BAND**

#### **Drake Middlebrook**

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**JWMHS\_COLORGUARD**

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**MITCHELL.CHOIR**